



CITY OF FALLS CHURCH

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEWS RELEASE

Police Confident Safety Status of City Parks & Trails Not Compromised by Malicious Wounding

City of Falls Church Police are confident that there is no threat to public safety either on the trail or within the community following the Tuesday, May 14 altercation that occurred at the intersection of Grove Ave. and the W&OD Trail (West End Park) in which a victim was stabbed in the hand.

Investigation suggests that this was an isolated incident on a targeted victim, and police do not believe it is related to any other assaults in the area. As a precaution, officers on motorcycles, bicycles, and foot have increased their patrols of the area.

Residents are encouraged to keep the following tips in mind as they continue their use of the City's trails and parks:

- Always stay alert.
- Carry a cell phone.
- Don't wear jewelry.
- Carry a noisemaker.
- Get training in self defense.
- Avoid unpopulated, deserted, overgrown, and unlit areas.
- Follow park laws and hours; violators are subject to fines and/or arrest.
- Use discretion in acknowledging strangers and ignore verbal harassment.
- Practice memorizing license tags or identifying characteristics of strangers.
- Use your intuition about a person or an area; avoid anyone or anyplace that leaves you feeling unsure.
- Stay in familiar areas.
- Don't wear earphones.
- Head out with a partner
- Alter or vary your route pattern.
- Identify locations of telephones or open businesses and stores along your routes.
- Wear reflective material if you must be out before dawn or after dark.
- Write down or leave word of the direction you are heading; tell friends and family of favorite routes.
- Carry identification or write your name, phone number, and blood type or other medical information on the inside sole of your shoe.

(Tips adapted from the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority and the City of Falls Church Police Dept.)

Detectives continue to investigate last week's incident and ask anyone with information to call 703-241-5053. If you encounter anything troubling or dangerous on the trail or at a park, call the police immediately.

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